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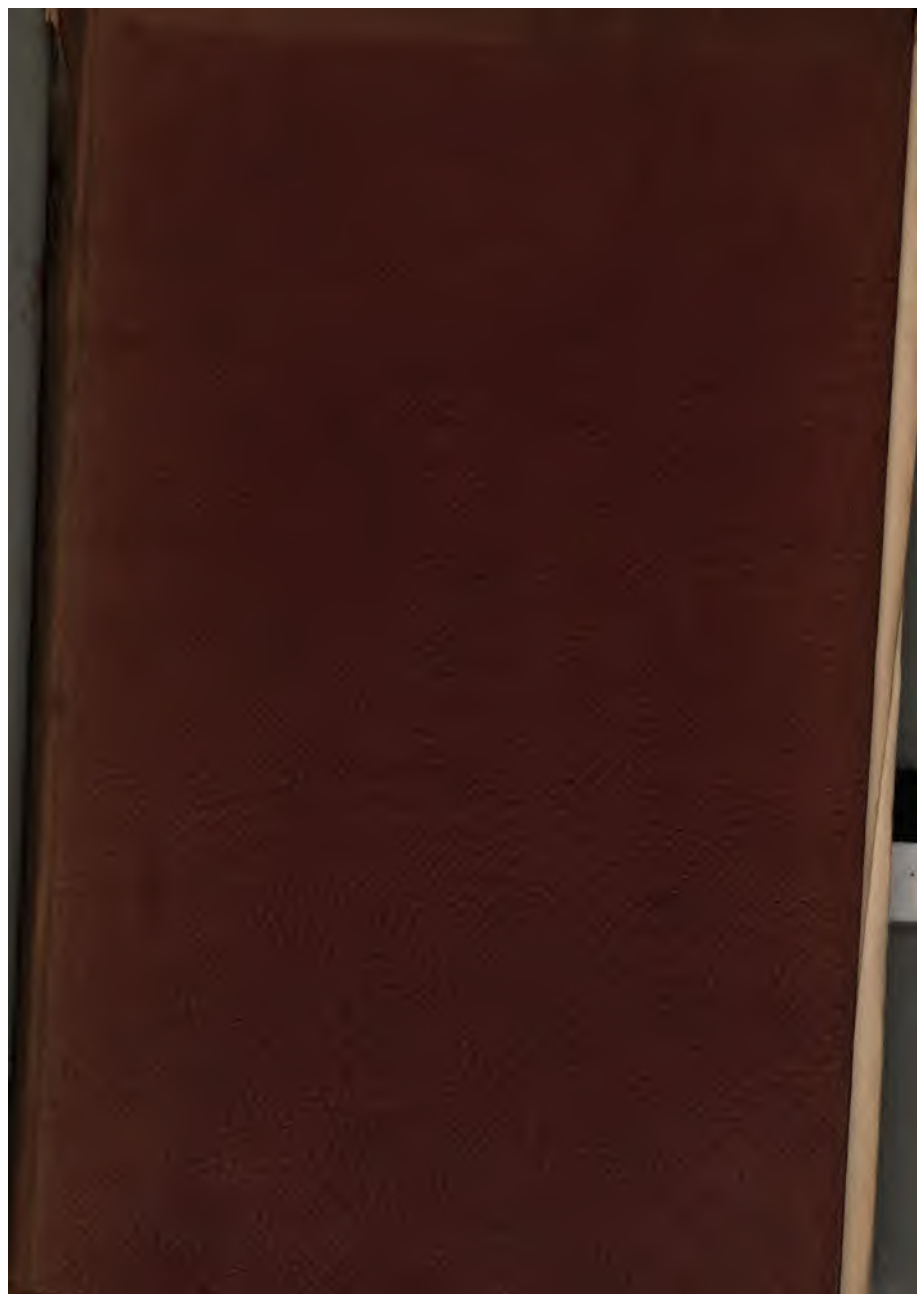
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THE
BROKEN HEART.



THE
BROKEN HEART:

A
METRICAL TALE.

IN THREE PARTS.

A tale full of the waters of the eye.

FIRDOUSE.



EDINBURGH:
WILLIAM TAIT, PRINCES STREET;
SIMPKIN AND MARSHALL, LONDON; AND
JOHN CUMMING, DUBLIN.

MDCCCXXXIII.

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PREFACE.

THE following fragments of a Metrical Tale, written during the winter of 1830–1831, are founded on an event, the real history of which shall rest in as deep an oblivion, as that which has long ago settled on the unfortunate actors of its melancholy drama.

For instances of human frailty similar to those endeavoured to be delineated in the following narrative, we need withdraw the veil of human character no farther than it is already exposed to daily observation. And the Editor has only to observe, that all attempts to torture the characters into existing personalities, will prove as abortive, as any effort to reconcile the line or

two about Newgate, with the actual condition of its cells, trials, or executions; as any wish to penetrate the motives which have induced him to publish the unconnected parts, as they appear, undigested, crude, and unpolished; or as any endeavour to discover the reasons why the author bequeathed this, with numerous other manuscripts, unfinished and unsigned.

EDINBURGH, DECEMBER, 1832.

THE
BROKEN HEART.

PART FIRST.

O love ! thou bane of every human joy.
Whose pains, or sweets, alike our peace destroy :
Still equal woes from thee mankind endure ;
Fatal thy wound, and fatal is thy cure !
TASSO'S Jerusalem Delivered.

THE BROKEN HEART.

PART FIRST.

A lonely star! and mirror'd on the water
Of a blue lake; and there a fair-born daughter
Of the green earth, is resting by its side,
And listening to the murmur of its tide
Among the snow-white pebbles: or the flow
Of crystal waves, that, like our passions, go
All varied in their hue and form, and more;
Yet curling onwards to the endless shore;
Or dying on th' abyss of nothingness!
An eastward star! and, from its homes of bliss,

It offers incense to that sister one,
Sighing unto the Elfin winds, that moan,
In plaintiveness, around the mournful maid ;
Lifting her sweeping ringlets, as they stray'd,
Like billows on the alabaster sands, 2
In waving loveliness o'er pearly lands.
For she was beautiful ! Her eye, the gleam
Of the blue heavens, reflected in its beam ;
Her cheek, the wild rose bursting into view
O'er lilies bending with the morning dew. 25
Yes, she was beautiful ! and, like a beam
Of morning light, she stole upon the dream
Of the young heart. As lucid, pure, and warm
As the high glory shone the living charm.
She seem'd a spirit of the sun, all bright, 30
In perfume risen from her couch of light :
A choral beauty, such as stole at whiles,
In welkin bands, from out the starry isles,
To walk in twilight, on this flowery land,
In times of old, beneath the Druid's hand, 35

She seem'd a form of fairy paradise
Gliding serenely through a world of vice :
A glimpse of sunshine o'er a tempest driven,
To fade too soon into its radiant heaven.
And she was in the spring of life. Her years
Were eighteen summer suns of smiles and tears.
Sweet rainbow tears, that scarcely dimm'd the rays
Of the long sunbeams of those happy days !

Why then, in pensiveness, doth she delight
To hear the hum upon the coming night ;
And watch the crimson fading on the blue ;
The new-born stars, as, sparkling into view,
Lonely, and one by one, their lamps appear,
Beacons along eternity's dim sphere —
The suns of regions circling far away
Into the pathless twilight of our day ?
She is no young astronomer, to trace,
Like the dark-eyed Egyptian, the bright space

Of mystic bodies ; but she gazeth there,
All listlessly ; for some unfathom'd care
Lay on her bosom, like a settling cloud
Across the waning moon. And she would shroud
A tear beneath the sable lash, and sigh ;
Or, like a kindred spirit, watch the sky.

'Tis love that on her bosom droop'd his wing !
But there is more of joy than sorrowing
Within his resting place ; for, even now,
There kneeleth one beside her, and the vow
Of early passion floateth, like the sound
Of air-borne melody, their forms around :
Children of earth, though varied was their lot,
He from the palace—she the mountain cot.

But not of humble parentage. Her sire
Was vicar of a peaceful fold. Desire
Of earthly happiness, of that content
In days and years that cheerfully came and went,

Long since had made the hamlet of the wild
Dearer than scenes of wo, wealth ill beguiled !
His was the sunny travel through the flowers,
Gemm'd in the beauty of the rainbow showers. 75
Philanthropy the altar where he trode :
Man was his brother, imaged from his God.
And he was happy ; though around his brows,
Old Time of fourscore years had wreathed the snöws.
Although beside him few their homes had made, 80
Not one, from such a blessing, ever stray'd
Into the world. It was a spot where howls
Seldom the ban-dog care, upon his prowls.

Yes, he was glad ; for happiness will bloom,
Like sunlight on the Dead Sea's desert gloom ; 85
And the light heart can shed a lighter gleam
Over this pilgrimage, as comes a dream
Of joy unto a lone one. He was there,
His aged wife, and infant child, to share

The stillness of life's evening, calmly now 70
Settling in promise o'er his placid brow.

The promise that was gilding o'er his days,
As morning light that on the gray cloud plays :
The lovely Ina, like a spring-tide gloam
Of purity, and bliss, around his home. 75

And there they flourish'd, like a hidden spring :
Of wild flowers waving with a summer wing,
When chance a wounded, youthful traveller threw
Beneath the shelter of their roof, where grew
Good without sophistry. The stranger, woke 80
To gratitude, his thrilling glances spoke.
Sweet was that summer night ! the evening prayer
Return'd thanksgiving for the child of care ;
Sweeter the morn, when kneel'd another one
Around the vicar's hearth, for mercy shone. 85
Edmund his name : a stranger from the west :
Son of an ancient line, whose spotless crest

Quarter'd a fame, through centuries of toil
Reap'd from the battle-field, and foeman's spoil.
Alferdo bade him every fear release, no
Despatch his messengers, and rest in peace.
And time, and friendship's hand soon chased away
The gloom of sickness ; and the healthy ray
Play'd in vermilion round his lips again :
The crimson blush'd above the marble pain. 115

Full well it pleased him, in the vicar's home,
Supported, as by Ina's side he'd roam,
Upon her lily arm, to praise the scene ;
The sunshine on the mountain and the green.
Not that to him they were a gladsome thought 120
For the high passions which their glory brought
Unto the bosom of that girl, who might
Be deem'd a part of nature's joy and light !
No ! for the city's curse upon his brow
Had stamp'd its deep anathema ! and now, 125
Even in boyhood, he was in the year
Of the heart's widowhood—of the soul's sear !

He cherish'd not a feeling—not a thought
Deeper than from some selfish fountain brought.
Uncurb'd from death, he had not linger'd there,
But for a tie, as powerful as rare,
And new upon a bosom, where desire
Alone had kindled her insensate fire.
Unlike—oh! how unlike that hallow'd flame,
Through the world's tempests, shining still the same!
The offering of the bosom in its morn;
A sky o'er which no selfish clouds are borne:
A virgin lamp, by angels trimm'd and dress'd,
Consuming on the altar of the breast;
Burning in lustre from its kindled breath,
Bright as we live, and dying with our death!

He saw the maid—was smitten with a love
For her, whose loveliness was far above
All he had vision'd. He beheld that rare,
And spotless purity, but to despair.
He felt the innocence he bow'd beneath
From him removed, as heaven is from earth.

He sigh'd to wash the venom from its seat,
And bring his cleansed heart to her holy feet.
And, in the solitude of self, he came
To deep, remorseful thinking, till the shame
Of years of waste and sinfulness were now
Repented of; and o'er his settling brow
There was a coming calm. Alas! the scorn
And mockery of men, like clouds upborne
Upon the fickle waters, lash'd again
His passions to the fury of the main.
'Tis ever so! and earth—earth hath a sneer
That curses, in its source, salvation's tear!
The query, what a scoffing world may say?
Has braced the heart-strings to their sternest play
Of pitiless despair. *Their* frozen hate
Goads on the libertine's untimely fate;
Hardens the culprit, when the scaffold's knell
Sounds, as his trembling spirit sinks to hell!
So terrible their hate, if *they* admired
The blasphemies their wretched plaudits fired!

So bitter the revilings of a crowd,
Base as the soul that to their baseness bow'd !

He felt the torment of each burning link '70
Of the world's thralment on his spirit clink
Consumingly : anon the voice of pride
Came, as an ignis fatuus, to his side,
Dazzling his vision. He believed he spurn'd
The voiceless thought that to his spirit burn'd : '75
The terror of a mortal smile,—a breath
Of calumny, that brought a withering death—
A dagger in its laugh. 'Twas false ! and he
Was victimised to his own treachery.
For sin had fallen, like a dismal shower '80
Of ravens settling on a marble tower,
Over his ruin'd breast, once light and fair,
Now darken'd as no joy were ever there ;
Like some Egyptian temple, that has been
Once beautiful, where loathsomeness is seen : '85

And the life streams were as a river dead,
Nursing corruption in its slimy bed.

What recks it of the stricken serpent's wile
That smote a fair creation with a smile ?
What recks it of the story ? He was one 140
Whose passions never woke, and throb'd alone,
But stirr'd a sympathy upon the heart
He chose, till it became of him a part.
And he was handsome, as the radiant form
Of a bright spirit bursting in a storm 145
Of brilliancy upon the soul, that brought
The homage which his dark eye proudly sought
From the applauding throng ; who, flattering, came
To gorge their empty chalice at the flame
Of his strong soul, that, fallen from all grace, 150
Grovel'd not with the mercenary race ;
But many a fetter of their bonds would burst,
Alas ! that sin had damn'd him with the worst !

Their credulous old hearts ; for, fondly, she 140
Clung like a tendril round a scathed tree !

And she is in her summer bower. The wings
Of the old sun are furled in shadowings
Of crimson, on the shores of light ; and high
The waveless ocean of the star-lit sky 145
Is resting, as an angel that doth keep
A holy vigil o'er the forms who sleep
In deep devotion. And an infant moon,
Like to a new-born spirit, will be soon
Abroad upon the evening, and will make 150
A hallow'd scene around that voiceless lake,
Where the still hamlet rose in thatch and white,
Chequer'd upon the beauty of the night.
The beetle's hum was silent as its flight
Ere Edmund stole upon her aching sight, 155
Burning with love, and fear, and shame : for though
She loved him, and believed he loved, no vow

THE BROKEN HEART.

15

Had pass'd between them ; and the only thought
Express'd, was in this interview he sought.

They met ! she with the mantling glow of one 24.
Who ceded over far : he with the tone
And tenderness revealing much, that yet
Might give emotions birth. A while they sat
In thrilling silence ; but there hung a lyre,
Whose symphony he woke at her desire ; 26
Chasing the slumber from its golden strings,
He steals a raptured glance of her, and sings :—

SONG TO INA.

I.

You bid me, lady, stir the voice
Of sacred sorrowings,
In wakening the silvery chords 27.
Unto their murmurings.

II.

The blessed song, in happier times,
As now, perchance, with thee,
Could gild the passing hours with bliss,
Or sing remember'd glee : 175

III.

Could make the sunshine lighter seem
Unto the lightsome boy ;
Or steal the memory unto
Some dream of early joy.

IV.

But, now the tones all mournfully, 180
As Jordan's waters go
Unto its mournful maids, who weep
The crystal streams that flow.

V.

And now the melody, all wildly
From the sainted strings, 184
No harmony of feeling ever
O'er my spirit brings.

VI.

And if their song should chant to olden,
Long-forgotten days,
Until the past a moment o'er 185
My soul in beauty plays ;

VII.

'Tis but a gleam of passing light
Across an age of gloom ;
A melancholy ray upon
The darkness of the tomb ! 186

VIII.

'Tis as the sound of liberty
Unto the fetter'd slave,
When murmur'd round his island prison
By the mournful wave.

IX.

'Tis as the morning, through the loop-holes, 265
On his wasted sight ;
As to remind him, he may never
More enjoy its light.

X.

And I am as the slave ! There is
No joy upon my heart ! 266
Nor can the golden chains of love
Belie the captive's smart.

XI.

And yet she bids her prisoner
To waken pleasure's string ;
And lovely as the night, as coldly
Ina hears him sing.

The gaze of his dark eye ! the sounding theme —
Away ! it could no longer be a dream
Of unreality. The mist's away,
And bursts the truth, bright as an eastern day
Upon the melting heart, that wildly now
Fear'd not to echo all the proffer'd vow.
What could she do ? Her lips — her soul outpours,
" Take the young offering that has long been yours !"
The promise of the paradise that's shed
Around the dying eastern warrior's head ;
The shouts of victory that thundering yield
Around the hero of a conquer'd field ;

The glittering riches of Golconda's skies,
In all their splendour, to the miser's eyes,
Never imparted such a sea of bliss 330
As those sweet words, seal'd by a holy kiss!

The tender offspring of religion, lone,
Rear'd in a world of passions all her own,
She had too little sorrow in her birth
To live, and love like children of this earth. 335
For she was pure as viewless shapes that fly
Along the diamond pathways of the sky ;
Such as the forms that sing their hymns alone,
Far in some holy regions all unknown.
She dream'd not how the bosom throbs to form 340
Of worldly custom. She had felt a storm
Of deep emotions, innocent as are
An angel's thoughts. She fell as falls a star !

After that evening, love supremely reign'd,
Over the hearts his golden bonds enchain'd. 345

She was all his ! and thought, their spirits one,
Far in the endless domes their vows had rung.
And she had visions of the choirs that swell
An anthem to the wedded ones, where dwell
The banded seraphim. She thought the tie, 30
Traced by an angel's finger on the sky,
Recorded to outlive the sounding day,
When earth's old glories all shall pass away !
O, early love ! why is your morning fair,
The rainbow glitter of a waste of care 35
Upon the bosom ? Why our infant years,
A sunshine on a wilderness of tears,
From the aweared eye, that may not see
A joy unshadow'd by some misery ?

Oh ! had she fallen, faded from on high, 40
As doth a shadow from a moon-lit sky,
To be no more, there would be no lament
To stir the harper's mournful instrument.
But she was changing — changing as a flower
That blooms no longer to the dewy shower, 45

Bathing its perfumed cup ; and, even now,
Unholy thoughts were falling on her brow
Still uncontaminated. For she lean'd
Unto his promise, as her credence ween'd
It sacred, and as true as that which rose 370
Out of a world of waters. Yes, her woes,
Like the old desert's, sprung from out the might,
That, fainter, minister'd to life's delight
Elsewhere.. Alas ! there was an earthly pride
Whispering the fascination of a bride 375
Of nobleness : In beauty's paths to take
A crested stand, as on a mountain lake
A stately swan doth see the fair ones lave
In plumed obeisance as she skims the wave.

Ambition ! a kaleidoscope of hues, 380
Chamelion as the lotus spangled dews,
Was robbing her of happiness ; no more
The world could bring an offering as of yore —
Phantasmagoria ! tracing to the eye
Its floating forms upon a fading sky. 385

Yes, she was changing ! Wo is me, to sing
The morn when she awoke to sorrowing —
The morning tide she fancied of a rest,
To the heart's yearnings on a kindlier breast,
Than one whose being was her life's blood. She *h*
Hath barter'd for a passion, purity,
Plumed for a loftier travel as it grew
On a young breast, whose slumber, ere it knew
The tainted world, was holy as the child
Asleep, whose first emotions were as mild. *11*

And is not love a holy feeling, bright,
Bright and all spotless as an angel's flight ?—
Yes, and as fleeting ! save where chosen ones
Shall blend, as do the many coloured zones
Of Heaven, and in their joy and peace may rove *4*
Among the deathless, glittering isles above,
Where there is neither marriage ask'd nor given,
But side by side the sainted bands of heaven,

All blissfully, in dazzling beauty go,
As higher their melodious anthems flow.

Her love was pure, as is a hallow'd kiss,
That drinketh joy from out another's bliss,
Until her bosom throb'd with agony
Of guileless sympathy, that she might be
All he could ask. And *He*, who on the form
Of the old covenant subdued the storm,
Had no compassion, blasted not, nor broke
The villain fabric with the lightning's stroke ;
But turn'd from her when worldly things could hide
The memory that hallow'd should abide
For aye upon the soul. The smother'd lie
Of feign'd devotion slew her purity.
She fell in infancy ! As, from afar,
The shepherd who beholds the falling star
Shoot from its radiant home, no more extent,
Than of its bright track o'er the firmament,

Can ever gather ; so I only sing
That she awoke to wo and sorrowing.

They were espoused. The rituals whisper'd o'er
By Edmund's brother, rear'd to sacred lore. 425
But 'twas a mockery ! a mockery that broke
Bitterly on her madden'd soul, that woke
Late from its wild illusion. And the reign
Of stolen pleasures shower'd its joys in vain
Over a breast that, as a stagnant brook, 430
Was sickly, and belied the smiling look.

Oh ! never more arose the morning light,
As once upon her spirits, pure and bright,
Seeming beneath its brilliancy to dance,
When half the lucidness was her own glance ; 435
As some unsullied lake, in glassy rest,
Doubles the sunshine mirror'd on its breast.
No joy was in the floating, woodland song,
Breathing of pleasures pass'd away and gone ;

The flowers, once blossoming as emblems fair, 440
Now bloom'd in innocence she could not share :
All, all was alter'd : in the noonday heat,
The rose seem'd sickly ; and beneath her feet
The harebell died unheeded ; in its sleep
Of pearly dew's the violet seem'd to weep 445
Departed joyfulness. Oh ! 'twas not so
Once, when she gladden'd nature as the bow
Of promise. There was not upon the earth,
Than Ina's heart, a lighter, till the birth
Of disobedience ; and there struggles now 450
No sadder one beneath a smiling brow !
Estranged and comfortless among her own
She moved ; the virtuous sympathy all flown,
Which sprung from out each venerable heart
Beloved ; of which she should have been as part 455
In virtue, when the autumn of their years
Into the winter of existence sears.
But daily, as her lips grew to deceive,
The fainter prospect glimmer'd to retrieve

Her infant error. And she closer clung 46
Unto that shrine where every feeling hung,
Until she learn'd to cherish without sigh,
Or tear, a wish her early home to fly ;
So cowardly is sin : it cannot brook
That objugation which the chiding look 46
Of injury reveals, as from the eye
The soul were breathing its intensity.
She felt the struggle as an agony
To mould her bosom to hypocrisy.
She learned how wild, tumultuous the beat, 47
Ere the heart flutter to its first deceit ;
But he had sworn it—sworn she was a bride.
He could not teach her bosom to deride
A parent's blessing ; but he swore that soon,
Confess'd unto the world, another moon 47
Should light them to forgiveness—swore that he
Would bear the anger of their mystery :
Fond stranger to the wayward mind—she came
By her exalted virtues to her shame.

'Twas evening ! and a love had overcome
The holy debt she owed her infant home.
The golden leaf was rustling to her tread,
As through th' autumnal pathways Ina sped
To join her aged sire, whose wrapt delight
Turn'd on the sunset, mellow'd like the night
Of his long years.

Upon a verdant bough
The lute of his fair daughter, idle, now
Hung, and no anthem from its blessed strings
Sounded, save when the breeze in murmurings
Swept through it as a spirit. Near him lay
The time-stain'd Bible knowing no decay !
And he was gazing where Religion's eyes
Should oftener bend,—upon the azure skies ;
As joy were gather'd from the look since she,
Who shared these placid scenes in infancy,
Was changing so of late. The old man rose,
Beholding his dear child ; suppress'd his woes

Under a smile, as many a breaking heart
Seems lighter—lighter in its bursting smart !

Awhile they sat in converse. Then they pray'd, cc
As wont in the spring days, before she stray'd
From his communion, and the moment brought
Of earlier, happier times the holy thought,
Till her heart soften'd. Then she could not bid
Farewell. There was a single tear slid cc
Over the time-traced cheek of the old man—
It was a dagger to her. He began :
“ Ina, my darling one ! sheds not the night
One ray of all its sweetness on your sight,
That linger'd often on the holy blue, cc
Bright as the inspirations which you drew
From its spring glories ? Autumn sheds a shower
Of golden colours on each leaf and flower ;
I dream'd not years could bring unto that heart
The sear of summer tenderness, or part cc

Our love. Oh ! let me kiss that tear away,
Nay, pardon me ! unhappy is the day,
When my unkindness, my rebuke can bring
A tear for ought of wrong, or sorrowing.”
He wept—he chided not. Alas ! that love 520
Should be its own destroyer ! as a dove
May nurse to death her young ; as dews may slay
The tender flowers. And she could only say,
“ My father, pardon *me* ! ” No more, or she
Had then confess’d, escaped her misery, 525
Drown’d in its tears, subdued in sobs that rent
Her bosom. Oh ! ’tis bitter to repent
Unutter’d crimes, but keener far the pain
To feel remorse, repentance rise in vain !
“ Go, lovely one ! ” he said, “ go clear those eyes, 530
And, as you swell your vespers to the skies,
Remember there is *One* you may impart
Each evil to that festers on your heart ; ”
For he had no belief of her deceit.
He said, and raised her weeping from his feet, — 535

"To-morrow we shall greet the parting day,
As we have hail'd it with a lovelier ray."

To-morrow ! Oh ! is there a living breast
That never long'd for some bright morrow's rest,
And dream'd, and dream'd until the morning woke sta
His soul to miseries no morrow broke ?
And he believed that mystery of sound
A promise, till his wo-worn bosom found
No morrow to its loneliness ! Away
She tore herself, for she had need to pray sta
In solitude, and penitence. No more ;
She left him—wearied—sunk upon the floor
Of the old chamber, and a blessed swoon
Came over her.

She waken'd to the moon
Streaming within the casement. There was deep,
Deep silence, and the inmates were asleep sta

Throughout the ancient parsonage. She felt
A damp upon her spirits ; low she knelt
Unto the starlit sky, and on the air
There rose the murmurings of holy prayer.

SC

THE
BROKEN HEART.

PART SECOND.

Full easey was for her to have belief,
Who, by self-feeling of feeble sexe,
And by long triall of the inward griefe
Wherewith imperious love her heart did vexe,
Could judge what pains doe loving harts perplex.
Who means no guile, be guiled soonest shall,
And to faire semblaunce doth light faith annexe :
The bird that knowes not the false fowler's call,
Into his hidden nette full easily doth fall.
SPENSER'S FAIRIE QUEENE.

THE BROKEN HEART.

PART SECOND.

AVE Maria ! 'tis midnight ! and again
Another morn is rolling o'er the main
Of countless ages, waning into space
Uncounted ! Whence began, and ends the race
Of long, unutterable ages, that will be
As shadows dying on th' eternity
Of endless future ! when the far back age
Of the old universe, from out the page
Of fathomless immensity, is fled,
And the created suns and stars lie dead

And lustreless upon the shores of deep,
Deep nothingness, for ever more to sleep !

The moon was brooding, like a spirit's wing,
O'er mountain, hamlet, and each quiet thing
That slumber'd by the still lake, where the Queen 15
Of Night was bathing in the holy sheen
Of her own beauty ; and she seem'd to play
Like a young bride upon her wedding day,
Mirror'd in love. She is a bride on high
To the cerulean glory of the sky ! 20
And is there not a wedding ? ay, each star
Is bidden to the festival from far
Untravell'd homes, and cometh in his light
To minister unto the holy rite
The elfin winds are singing of. How blest, 25
To be of that immortal throng a guest !

The spirit of that marriage-feast was there,
Looking adown the ambient crystal air

Upon the noiseless parsonage, at rest,
Save for the feelings stirring in the breast 20
Of that fair girl, whose minstrelsy of praise
Was floating from the casement : and her gaze
Was fix'd in vacancy ; for wordless thought,
Deeper than from the eye's delight, is brought.

He came ! The marble-hearted villain came 35
In joyfulness, unclouded by a shame,
To steal away the maid. 'Twas robbery,
And sacrilege ! for she his treachery
Suspected not. She drew her veil around
Her snowy features—utter'd not a sound 40
Of hesitation. As she pass'd the door
Where the old vicar slumber'd, on the floor
She kneel'd, and wept a blessed vow—a prayer.

The morning came, but Ina was not there,—
The scion of his earthly hope : she's gone. 45
He bow'd his head, and said, “ *Thy* will be done ! ”

A waste of misery : and hath a year
Not given birth to one remorseful tear ?

It hath—it hath! The year, that pass'd as soon 2
As flies the rack across the harvest moon,
Hath seen her changed, as clouds upon the streams ;
In beauty gone, as evanescent dreams.
And though she's lovely, and the laughing look
Brightens, like sparkling lights on crystal brooks, 3
'Tis not the sunshine of the happy spring,
But the wild glare, and fitful shadowing
Of autumn's floating storms. You might descry
The tear to chase the laughter from her eye.
Grief traced a sickly line across the snow 4
Of her bright forehead ; and a child might know
There was some shadowing, dim and undefined,
As mists o'er summer seas, across her mind.

The memory of virtue held its reign
Over the secret chambers of her brain 5

In irony and woe. Her peace of mind
Faded, like morning hues before the wind.
And awful thoughts arose, that she might be
Doom'd to the grave of her own misery.
Reflecting on the authors of her birth—
Our earliest, dearest, latest friends on earth—
Was misery insufferable ; she
Had perish'd, but she hoped, believed, that he,
Whose cherish'd image on her dotting breast
Lay shrined—a precious idol in the rest
Of guileless faith—was changeless as the star
Guiding the northern mariner afar.
A sinful fascination ! for she saw
His wickedness, but fear'd to think on more.

She knew that, with a woman's heart to love,
Is to have beacon'd a lone fire above
All casualty—all mortal change ;
A star among the galaxies to range

Of unextinguish'd lights. She fondly dream'd
Some lofty and redeeming glory beam'd 126
On man, as holy. Oh ! it may be so !
But round his worshipp'd form it never threw
Its sainted halo ; and, relentless, he
Could sacrifice her to his infamy.

She trusted to a meteor show, as doth 127
Unto the fatal glare the idle moth,
To find its ruin. Of his falling soul
She moved a part, as wave on wave doth roll.
She seem'd a dove, aweared with a flight,
That resteth never, on the waters bright ; 128
A journeyer on a wilderness of pain,
With vision'd joys his footsteps never gain,
And yet no backward travel ; for the cloud
Hung there of wounded pride, like to a shroud
Wrapping her in the aching heart's remorse, 129
The living tomb of a self-murder'd corse.

Where was her path ? She cherish'd the sunlight
Of hope; but she remember'd not the might,
In all her weeping, of that pearly spring
Of lone contrition, that can draw the sting
Of sorrow from the fading bloom, redeem
The soul from its old ways and wayward dream.
And early she withdrew her stricken eyes
From the communion of her sister skies,
Thinking to find oblivion in the rout
Moving unto the midnight glare, and shout ;
Or striving to belie the rankling pain
Of a corroding heart, amid the train
Of pleasurings. Alas ! she moved away
From homage she received, as doth the day,
Unto the dismal doubts that darker prest,
With nightmare fearfulness, upon her breast.
But morning brought no promise to her grief,
Until it grew a joy to gain relief
In mad festivity. She spread the board,
And lighted the saloons ; the garter'd lord,

140

141

142

143

And plumaged beauty, waved her dignity :
They came—the noble, titled, proud, and gay !

But these, although they made the passing time
Seem witching moments of some fairy clime, 60
Could never stifle the envenom'd smart,
That, in the laugh, was stealing to her heart,
As a cold snake. She toil'd—the phantom joy
Eluded her, as insects from the boy.

So wing'd the weary days. One night their hall, 85
After the echoings of the jocund ball
Had died away, resounded to the shout
Of a less numerous, but a boisterous rout.
Edmund, and those debauch'd and mad as he,
Circled the goblet in an ecstasy 170
Of midnight drunkenness. And louder came
The sound of their carousals, as the flame
Of lust grew higher : each polluted toast
Rose like a wild yell from a heathen host.

And there uprose, among the hateful throng, 175
One who exclaim'd for music and for song ;
And, in the clamour, call'd their host to bring
His mistress, and demanded she should sing.

Fire to the fuel ! so the cursed demand
Flash'd on the monster : loud beneath his hand 180
Rang the long board ; he laugh'd, and sternly swore
For her obedience ; waved his hand — no more—
Flung from the room, and, ere they gave his name
And hers a pledge along their ranks of shame,
Crash'd the hall door, and, reeling, he appears, 185
Dragging the lovely creature, bathed in tears
Of victim'd innocence. To honour she
In vain appeal'd. Sunk in debauchery,
All laugh'd in scorn, and drank, upheld the lyre,
And, breathing thoughts of baseness and desire, 190
Clamour'd for music. When she look'd around,
Where her protection should have been, she found

A scowl of bitterness. Without a choice,
She swept the plaintive chords, and, with a voice
Sobbing and tremulous, she warbled out 415
Some favour'd ditty, till they sent a shout
Applauding to the ceilings. Edmund smiled,
Bearing her wine, with words and gestures mild.
And such a smile unto her sickening sight
Was as the wan moon to the winter night, 200
Gilding its leafless age ; and by the day
Or midnight hour she would adore that ray.

She wiped the pearl-drop from the shrouding lash,
Bow'd to the throng she hated ; and the flash
Of her blue eye was kindlier, as she play'd 205
A symphony he loved ; her fingers stray'd
A moment o'er the harp-strings, and she sung
A mirthful cadence, that all gladly rung :

SONG TO EDMUND.

I.

A song ! for the lark is springing
From his sleep in the perfumed hay ; 210
A song ! for creation is singing
The joyful orisons of day.

His image to me is the orient day,
Whose voice is the music of winds, at their play
Afar in the domes 215
Of their crystal homes.
Oh ! sing him a roundelay !
A merry roundelay !

II.

A song ! for the holiest feeling
I wander'd away from my home : 220
And the joy of the dulcimer, stealing
A love from the heart, as we roam—

When the fountain of mirthfulness springs from the bowl,
When there 's bliss on the bosom, and hope on the soul,
 Shall gladden the day, 124
 Like a star on the way,
With some old roundelay,
Some merry roundelay !

III.

A song ! o'er the waters of wo
 We'll journey to some sunny isle ; 125
And the glories of music shall flow
 With the murmurs of love to that smile.
In the moments of bliss, you shall list, by my side,
To the anthems that swell from the harp of your bride,
 To the laughing sky ; 126
 And life shall go by
Like a blessed roundelay,
A merry roundelay !

One wave succeeds another, and the last
Ever swells higher to the rising blast : 240
So fell her favours. And the joy she lent
Unto the gladsome moments, with intent,
Was misinterpreted, as if a vile,
Corrupted bosom judged by its own guile.
Robb'd of her fame, she bore no dignity, 245
No charm of name, to quell their treachery.
They were corrupted, and they deem'd she was
No fairer in communion there : alas !
Too fatal prophecy ! for seldom more
We welcome back a wanderer from the shore ! 250

Among the company, Augustus, Lord
Of Vere, an honour'd guest, turn'd from the board,
To gaze upon that syren one, who shined
Amid corruption, as a diamond shrined
In darkness ; and, in that unholy throng, 255
A snow-white cygnet the dark waves among,

She seem'd. And he was bending with an eye
Of sacrilege upon the purity
He fear'd; for the unhallow'd wish he nursed
Within a bosom that—accursed! accursed!— 26
Breathed in an evil hour! For Edmund woke
Suddenly from his drunkenness, that broke
As doth an ocean-barrier. He restrain'd
His passion, as a war-steed had been rein'd
Back by a mighty spirit: then his hand 26
He waved; he led that fair one from the band
Of senseless-stricken drunkards, as a form
Were stirring, that could rouse or quell the storm.
Ere they regain'd their seats, he calmly stood
Again amongst them; but a glance of blood 27
Gleam'd in his eagle eye, with such a look
As lights an ungorged vulture—Yes, they shook
With cowardice; for, in debauchery,
They knew his spirit spurn'd the slavery
Of insult; and but few remain'd to see 27
The passion, working deep and furiously,

Burst from his tameless breast. The only words
Exchanged were pass'd upon the sheathless swords.

Few words indeed ! For injury doth bear
Little debate, when it should do and dare ; 215
And hatred sternly sits upon the heart
In desert silence, and is never part
Of the mouth's emanation. Forth they drew,
Without a breath, save for the curse that flew
As herald of the soul—There, in a mood 215
Of blood and death, how terribly they stood !

Coolly, as for a marriage-feast arranged,
The seconds the minutest form exchanged
Of the infernal orgies,—as the sin
Of murder cast no awful shadowing 220
Upon their frozen thoughts,—as though the night
Might shelter from the skies their hellish rite
Of human butchery. A stronger light
Blazed from the chandeliers ; and the bright

Ungorged weapons glitter'd like the play, 295
Beneath the moonlight, of the ocean spray.

The signal ! and in scientific form,
They lend them to the murder ; and a storm
Of wrath ungloated darkens on the brow
Of each antagonist. Now, higher now 300
Rises the warrior-game; and long they stood,
Until Augustus reel'd, and sunk in blood !
Fell like a lofty banner with a breath,
A blast of heaven : sick, sick unto death
He gasp'd in his own gore. Oh ! bitterly 305
He smiled, and as, for ever, closed the eye,
A moment since so perilous—so proud !
Cold, dismal paleness settled like the shroud
Of death upon his features. Soft, they bore
Him to a couch, as one to wake no more. 310

Edmund ! he started, as the thunder driven
Across the eyrie, startles to the heaven

The bright-eyed eagle : slow, his hand he drew
Over his temples, like to one who knew
But indistinctly, or as one who rose 307
Suddenly from a dreamy, deep repose
Unto bewilderment ; he wildly cast
A glance upon that slaughter'd one ; at last
He knew he was a murderer : too late
Aroused from that entrancement to his fate ! 310
The fate that hath no language to reveal
Its sufferings—an exile ! No appeal
To conscience : that was deeper, deadlier, worse
Than murder : 'twas a slow, a deathless curse.

Alas ! alas ! the melancholy doom 311
Is darkening, like night around a tomb,
Over the hapless Ina, who, in tears,
Rose to the widowhood of wedded years !
Away he fled, swift as a plumaged flight,
From the pursuit : oh ! what a morn of blight 312

Seem'd that unhappy morrow ! not a ray
Of magic hope ; as if the fates would play
With her sad destiny : 'twas but the gloom
And shadowing of miseries to come.

Alone upon the world ! for he is gone, 335-
Who was a world to her ; yes, he hath flown
Without a word of promise ; never more,
In the fair day, to wander on the shore
Of his own land. He vilely hath betray'd
The girl, that to his honour madly laid 340
Her prospects on this earth, her hope of heaven,
Like the dew-offering of a moment driven
For ever to oblivion on the blast.
It was not of this world—it could not last,
But as a dream, a vision, gathering breath 345-
From blessed regions, where there is no death
To such a passion. He is gone, and she
Is seeing now her sin and misery—

Is seeing now the world, and men, as they
Denuded move across the cloudless day 370
Of sober reasoning ; and gathering woes,
Like conjured dreams, were rising, with the throes
Of wounded virtue, sinking to the stroke
Of cruelty, its tender strings hath broke !

Days, months are passing as the shadows fly, 375
Like sisters to the sunlights, o'er the sky
Of sameless April. All things now are changing
Their aspect, as the formless clouds arranging
Their glories to the storm. All,—even they
Who spread their wings unto her golden day, 380
Are vanishing as rainbow wonders fade ;
And those who worshipp'd her in proud tirade,
Kissing the hands their services repay,
Are falling from her ; and the hireling's lay
Hath ceased to echo in the empty halls. 385
No mirth resounds within the festoon'd walls,

No, not a voice ! for poverty is there
Worse than a pestilence upon the air,
Making dishonour odious to a throng,
Who, in her tinsell'd colours, waved the wrong. 270

Down, down as falls a comet ! In her light
Of sin she gloried ; she must brook the spite,
The stern neglect, far deeper than the gloom
Of death, the horrors of a living tomb !
'Tis like a deathless agony, to be 375
Haunted for ever by the memory
Of early disobedience, in a time
Of thoughtlessness, when it was not a crime,
Yet stirr'd the mind to callousness ; disease
Ushering in its wake its miseries, 380
As doth the foaming sea its wrecks ; yet far,
Far from repenting, like a burning star
It rageth still ; she loves him, and she never,
Despite of injuries, that love will sever

From the consuming bosom, where alone 385
She'll bury and lament the mournful one,
Chaining her to a world—a world that now
Hath but forgetfulness to give, and wo,
Wo to the dregs ! Abandon'd, homeless, she
Excites no throb of passing sympathy, 390
No, not their pity ! Lo ! a dungeon's gloom,
The prison'd horrors seem a welcome doom !
As the proud forest ones, when wounded, fly
Where no unhallow'd gaze shall mark them die.

Yes, she is in a dungeon ! Who is there 395
Hath never seen a sun rise gild the fair
And far horizon with a crimson light,
That faded to the stormy gloom of night
Untimely and unprophesied ? So, now
The aspect of despair is on her brow. 400
And she hath hours of wordless bitterness,
When the denuded bosom cannot bless

Itself with that religious triumph, calm,
Unterrified : the sweet, the rainbow balm,
Springing from untold fountains of the heart, 401-
Where the polluted breath has held no part ;
That shadow of a coming fate, that bright
And restless prayer, without whose holy light
The earth were as a void ; nought, nought to bless
Where all must centre in a nothingness ; 410
Our hopes awake to perish, all to die
In ages far into futurity,
And rot in dark oblivion ! — never ! the
Conviction 's in the thought's intensity.

A month of solitude, and tears, and wo, 411-
Wasting the beauty of that girl,—and, lo !
Another moon ; and, by its sickly light,
A stranger to the prison greets her sight,
Like to a spectre ; as, unwelcome, he
Broke on her solitude, in mockery 412

Of his infernal work : it is no dream !
The Lord of Vere, beneath the waning gleam
Of evening, standeth unabashed. She thought
Dishonour, with a bloody grave, he bought
That fatal midnight ; and she felt a fear, 42c
As if a tenant of the grave were near,
Until he kneel'd, and with a living voice
Saluted her. She shudder'd, but no choice,
Save listening to his hated breath, was there :
She sat collected proudly. With an air 43c
Of feigned passion he detail'd a string
Of brutal falsehoods ; yes, he wish'd to fling
Himself upon her love.

She calmly rose,
With queenly dignity, above all woes.
“ Augustus,” she exclaim'd, “ your guilty mind 43c
Should tremble, as an aspen to the wind
Of summer, thus to trespass on the one
Your villainy hath widow'd and undone

To all but crime. The world is nothing now
To me ; my days are numbered over ! Go, 44c
Go, miserable man ! go, and lament
The blood-track of your infamous, misspent,
And wasted years ! For pity's voice, leave me
To my own loneliness and misery !
Oh ! do not fancy I will ever stain 44c
This last retreat of wretchedness and pain
By the pollution of this mouldering bed
Of straw : its cold embrace I long to wed
With death ! Go, for the earthly moments given
Are fading, and are sacred to the heaven 45c
Of an offended God. No more !" Away
She waved him haughtily ; he turn'd to say
A word of exculpation, but the calm,
The beauty of distress, had such a charm
Ineffable, he durst not, for the shame 45c
Of guilt, annoy her presence. As he came,
He went, in silence, only as a breeze
Subsides to rise upon the stormier seas.

He went, but to his work. A letter sent,
Forged as from Edmund, purposing intent 460
Her to forsake for ever ; in excuse,
Charging her with some faithlessness, abuse
Of their betrothment ; and it said, adieu !
The morrow brought this forgery to her view.
Still unsuspecting, she was pondering o'er 465
Some early recollection ; and no more
She utter'd, on perusing it, than some
Sepulchral groan, as from a living tomb,
Without a tear. She flung her aching head
With a despair upon the squalid bed : 470
Alas ! the slumber of that night was long
In wakening unto the morning song !

Long, long indeed ! for in the tearless eye
There kindled maniac frenzy ; and the dry,
The burning forehead pulsated with pain 475
Of fever, lighted in the burthen'd brain,

Tortured beyond endurance, till despair
Stamp'd the enduring curse of madness there ;
The awful judgment ! as a world were dash'd
Into confusion ; all the senses crash'd
And broken up : thought, fancy, memory, all
Buried beneath a chaos, which we call
A lunacy ; a cataleptic mind
The spirit of the past hath left behind !

440

When next the daylight, in its beauty, play'd
Unto her consciousness, she was array'd
In great magnificence. She had exchanged
A prison for a palace, and, arranged,
She lay in luxury. She had a dread
Of some unhallow'd dream : she was not dead,
Yet felt all weak, and spiritless, and low,
And giddiness and sickness on her brow,
Without a recollection. Then she'd weep
Awhile — anon compose herself to sleep.

445

449

With the still evening, seraph calmness came 445~
Over her heart : she felt as though a flame
Had wasted to its socket ; and she wept
A solitary tear, and thought she'd slept
Long, long, and far away, where spirits live
In heavenly communion ; she did grieve 500
To lose so fair a vision, for a train
Of strange misgivings floated through her brain.
No wonder ! She is resting in the hall
Of the Lord Vere ; whenever she would call
On Edmund, he appear'd, and kneel'd him low 565~
Beside her curtain ; with a hectic glow
Of joy she greeted him, as the lost one
Whose absence she unceasingly would mourn.

With heartless selfishness he dared to look
Upon that countenance, whose hue had shook 570
A breast of adamant, to see the trace
Of faded intellect across the face

Of sorrow born of sunshine, had there been
One blessing of the soul behind the screen
Of his iniquity ; but there shone not
One virtue to redeem the sinful blot
Upon a heart that blacken'd in a breast
Spiritless as the passions it caress'd.

The fever settled, and the madness slept
Within its cells : alas ! her eye, bereft
Of the unfathom'd thought, in vacancy
And wandering, was but a mystery
Of wasted intellect. And though she grew
To health and loveliness of form, she knew
Nought of her melancholy fate. The brow
Pass'd not from its eclipse unto a glow
Of former consciousness, to beam as skies
Unsullied, when a falling darkness flies
Across their lucidness. Alas ! alas !
The lovely girl is never what she was,

But stricken awfully. She loved to play
Continually some wild and merry lay
Upon her harpsichord ; she smiled, was glad,
And loved Augustus — she must still be mad !
A lunatic and villain ! 'Tis a love
Of damned sacrilege, and cries above
All smothering, and it can never, never,
Be but a curse the union shall dis sever !

525

A dreadful curse ! for gradually a thought
Broke on her being ; in its wake it brought
Convicted guilt, too horrible to be
Supported. Oh ! it was the infamy
Of self creating ! Deeper, deeper in
To the affianced whirlpool force of sin
She fell. Hope died : unblushingly
She learn'd to countenance iniquity !

540

544

Faithless unto herself, how could she be
True to Augustus ? No : inconstancy

Came, as the crested mane upon the billow,
Lighting it to its last and rocky pillow. 550
She wearied for some shadowy desire
Of restless wickedness ; unclean desire
Throbb'd through her arteries : In pity deem
It sprung from madness—an unholy dream !

Her treachery Augustus heard. A curse 555
Utter'd the harden'd libertine : his purse
Closed with his passion. He had lived too long
Familiar with vice to care for wrong
Such as he work'd to others ; and he turn'd
Away with apathy.

Abandon'd, spurn'd, 560
Once more from home and fortune, did she lift
Her gaze as from the tempest-driven rift
Of fortune, mocking her credulity ?
No ! for long since, upon the memory,

Perish'd the freshness of the heart that springs 565

Alone from innocence in sufferings ;

No ! for the guilty, like the spaniels, fawn

Around the hand upraised to smite them down.

There is no courage—none, without the glow

Of moral purity upon the brow : 570

The buoyancy of sin, the lofty frame,

The workings of despair, receive the name ;

But conscience—an all-searching eye behold

The blasphemy. No—guilt is never bold !

And she was guilty—guilty of a crime 575

Deadlier than death, yet living through all time ;

And, ere another night, another scene

Of harlotry was hailing her as queen.

The fairest meteor that in heaven dies,

May rise in other ages on the skies ; 580

The radiant loveliness of summer bloom,

Will spring in verdure from its winter tomb ;

But there are fair born things that brightly burn,
Which, dying, leave us never to return
In joy upon the sight, that acheth aye
In wandering o'er their ruins as they lie.

585

The scentless flower and leaf no sorrowing
Impress, for they shall blossom in the spring
Of sunnier times ; but, when we ponder o'er
The bygone glories that may never more
Beam on the soul, the beauty to depart,
There is a grief upon the sickening heart.

590

The traveller, who stands where Rome hath stood
Thousands of years ago, in pensive mood,
As an Italian autumn, with a wing
Of golden beauty, lights each ruin'd thing,
Looks not unto her leafless forests,—they
Shall greenly wave unto a brighter day,—
But sighs at seeing some old architrave,
That mournfully bedecks the moss-grown grave,

595

600

Where the famed City of the Seven Hills
Perish'd for ever in her own wrought ills.

So mourn we for that injured girl. The shame
Of evil habits wasted her fair frame
Like to a fester spot. Alas ! the bloom
Of heaven-gifted beauty's in the tomb
Of sorrow ; and the blushing rose, that shed
Its crimson on the living pearl, lies dead.
Faded the charm of innocence that play'd
On coral lips, like sunlights, when they stray'd
Among carnation flowers ; where should rest
The ringlets, as upon the cygnet's breast
The streams of morning brightness, there, untied,
They float o'er deathliness they never hide.

Then, with the fading of that seraph face,
The loftiness of thought, pride's magic grace,
Were dying, as if dignity of mind
Loved sympathy of form in human kind ;

As nursed on beauty's bosom, some delight
Were to an angel there to rest his flight. 620
But sin, with funeral plumage, seems to stain
The fairest born of earth. Beneath his reign
Of sable darkness she no longer seems
One of the rich creations of our dreams,
As once we liken'd her ; no, sin hath shed 625
A cloud above the virtue that lies dead.
And, step by step, the gilded stairs adown
Of fortune she was lanch'd by every frown
Of the world's loathsomeness ; and up, afar,
As falling, fainter gleam'd the beacon'd star 630
Of hope fast withering. Alas ! the light
Sank to sepulchral darkness from her sight.

For ever, o'er a bosom that must be
For aye a wilderness of agony,
The sad pollution, that was once delight, 635
Now brought a nightmare horror to her sight.

The sigh an angel could have once bereaved
Of peace, as from its dove-like home upheaved,
Now, like the simoom's infected breath,
Rose from a wilderness of wo, and death. 640
Yes, she is reaping of her crimes the fruit,
A friendless, homeless, hopeless prostitute!

And what a fearful difference was there
Between her early years and now! Despair
Haunted her like a phantom; night, only night, 645
Cloak'd from the multitude the hateful sight.
Like all unsightly things, forth, with the owl,
And wolf, she bends her dark, unholy prowl,
Into the paths of death. The nightly scene
Starvation prompted; ay, the hunger keen 650
Of biting poverty gnaws in her side
With a demoniac voice, that would deride
The frenzy which it goaded: Like a breath
She linger'd to the earth, yet dreaded death.

Then, if repentance o'er her thoughts would sweep, 655
Fitfully, as a sea-bird o'er the deep,
There was no resting for the herald now ;
Above her head no heaven-painted bow
Smiling in promise. Many voyagers go
Astray upon the waters, as they flow, 660
In sweet delusions, on the pearly shore
To gaze for aye—to wander never more.

Alas, she perish'd ! But in sin so slowly,
That o'er her mad career it were unholy,
And sacrilege unto the sainted lyre 665
To linger so. She died, not as a fire
Consumed by its own raging fury—not
A borealis light to be forgot.
Although existence was a pang—a hate
Insufferable, yet she fear'd the fate 670
Haunting with dreams, the moments of remorse,
Horrible as the touch of a cold corse.

She dared not die ! yet living was a curse —
An awful curse upon her, and was worse
Than madness. Every female grace was gone : 675-
'Twas sorrowful, where youthfulness still shone,
To see no joy. The laugh of bitterness,
The bloodhound's bay upon the wilderness,
, Seem'd o'er the wreck of virtue. Oh ! in sooth,
'Twas very sad to gaze upon her youth ! 680
Indeed, 'twas very sorrowful to see
Her that had birth in hope and brilliancy,
As if created of the sun — as though
A star that falleth from some radiant bow
Of bliss upon the earth — to see the light 685-
Of promise stir her heart-strings to the bright
And sainted passion, and to mark the stain
Of disappointment, and the early pain
Of falsehood overshadow her. The bloom
Of blighted years be wedded to the tomb 690
Of Eden's curse. God save thee, maid ! the ban
Of the creation's on the courtesan !

THE
BROKEN HEART.

PART THIRD.

Hark ! the hymn is singing—
The song for the dead below,
Or the living who shortly shall be so !
For a departing being's soul
The death-hymn peals, and the hollow bells knoll.
BYRON.

But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.
PROVERBS, ch. v. ver. 5.

THE BROKEN HEART.

PART THIRD.

TIME came and went! Edmund at length return'd
Unto a country which had long inurn'd,
And buried each remembrance of the good
Or evils manifold. The solitude
Of years in foreign regions left their mark,
As of a world of care, across the dark
And moody forehead, once the ivory,
With ringlets falling dark as ebony.
The fiery eye was tamed; the stately tread
Was faltering and slow, and there aread

The dissolution, and the shadowy play
Of some deep, inward, fathomless decay :
For pleasure is a worm that feedeth aye
Upon the beauty that must die—must die!

The majesty of soul, if pride may be 16
In reckless sufferings a dignity,
Care conquered not ; his desecrated heart
Beat scornfully above disease—the smart
Rankling upon a bosom that hath toil'd
Ages, unto a phantom, joy that foil'd 18
Its rotten grasp. In premature old age
He grew misanthropic ; he learn'd to wage
A victory of self ; he wish'd to hate
The multitude ; he tried to scoff at fate
In bitter mockery, although he knew 25
His number'd hours were passing, and were few.

All things are fair and pleasant to the boy ;
All Nature is a wonder, and a joy ;

A glory on his mirthful heart : how strange,
As years and knowledge magnify the range 30
Of intellect, capacity to drink
Deeper of joys, the magic pleasures sink !
The talismanic spell, the imagery
Is fled to where it sprung, from mystery :
So Edmund felt. The days were burthensome, 35
Where purer influences never come.
The scene of revelry, the drunken night,
The festive table, still were his delight,
And old companions ; or upon his heart
A deathless curse, that never might depart : 40
And, as our fortunes in adversity
Of worldly change, beget a sympathy,
Augustus grew a friend to him, far more
Acceptable, respected, than before ;
They quaff'd the bowl together, and the haunts 45
Where harlotry unto the midnight flaunts
In dizen'd colours, found them in their madness
One evening, when the laughing form was gladness

Over corruption : They were of a throng
Of many listening the lascivious song. 50

Beneath the lustre, Edmund turn'd his gaze,
Unconsciously, on one with great amaze.
Indeed, although attracting none, there was
A something chill'd, and made the loudest pause :
She was not beautiful ; the shadowy trace 65
Of faded beauty linger'd on her face ;
And there was undefined and mystic wo
Within the twilight paleness of her brow ;
The rose lay wither'd ; all was wan and white,
As star-beams on the waters of the night. 70
As silently he ponder'd o'er the waste
And marble aspect, he would turn in haste,
Thinking to see that melancholy one
Was strange, where all in borrow'd laughter shone. .
The proffer'd glass refused, he linger'd, look'd 75
Where, statue-like, the lonely figure brook'd,

Impatiently, his scrutinizing eye—
The pallid features utter no reply.

Some long forgotten recollections rise
Faintly, as floating mists across the skies,
Haunting the dead remembrance ; it might be
A waking dream, a vision'd imagery
Of old associations ; thoughts that long
He ween'd had perish'd with the ages gone
Down o'er the memory : *one*, silently
With the dark grave, he shared in secrecy.
Yet he became distemper'd by a thought
He hated : sadly he adjourn'd, and sought
The freshness of the night air.

Vere return'd,
Accompanying him ; and of his dulness learn'd
A passing hint. Augustus had not seen
The author of his malady, to ween

Who she might be :—“ Then happier you ! ” There
came

A shudder, as of death, across his frame :

“ Augustus, there are early deeds, that deep a-

I fancied in the cold oblivious sleep

Of buried time, this evening rose, as saith

The Writ, a sound shall burst the sleep of death ;

And there were recollections came that make

My soul, as waters to the tempest, quake. to

O man, I sicken'd, sicken'd ! — Bear with me ” —

He faltered, — “ This is raving foolery ! ”

They parted. At their meeting every word

Of past disturbance, mutually, each lord

Consign'd unto oblivion ; but of thought to

The coming moments no oblivion brought.

No ! deep, far deeper than perception's spell,

Envenoming the soul, there seem'd to dwell

A fester that was poisoning his life :

The centre of existence seem'd a strife too

Of smother'd grief, too deadly far to dwell
Within the living, yet too great to tell.

Edmund, as his untimely moments drew
Narrower, nearer in their circled clew
Of old fatality unto his doom 105
Of death, grew gloomy as the coming tomb,
Shadowing his mind. Once, only once again
He left his pleasure grounds, to seek the vain
Illusion of a second, in the roar
Of London : bitter, bitter as before 110
The agony he suffer'd.

Suddenly

Arrested, in returning, by a cry
Of anguish, he beheld upon the street,
Weltering in blood, a female at his feet,
Senseless, the victim of the cruelty 115
Of some insensate monster. Edmund, he

Sprung from his carriage, offer'd her relief:
He raised her gently— Horror brief, how brief!
The hurried glance—the palid cheek—the same!
Was it created from his haunted shame '26
In ideality of madness? No!
A curse he falter'd out—he left her low
Among the crowd, who deem'd him, as behind
Afar he fled them, frenzied as the wind.

And Vere was fancying of a lunacy '25
Working on disappointment; for, when he
Spoke words of comfort, Edmund smiled in scorn
And stern contempt; muttering, in tones forlorn,
“ Speak not to me of pleasure— No! this heart
I wish to burst, unfetter'd by a smart '26
Of earth's delusions. Never more with me
Can hope beguile me to her imagery:
One wish I cherish; all that I would say,
If in my cowardice I cringe to pray,

Should be, Oh! dash this spectre from my eye, 184
And, as I 've lived despised, so let me die!"
The heathen prayer, the glance with fury fraught,
Were sorry raillery, as pride were ought
From such a worm to Majesty on high,
Pitying the folly which must fearfully die. 185

Augustus mark'd the bright, unholy eye,
Where the consumption lit its brilliancy,
A beacon unto death, and, as the hour
Of dissolution near'd, for ever more
Forsook the sufferer. — "So should it be!" 186
Cried Edmund; but he brooded silently
His maledictions, — more he thought upon
Himself for weeping, than for him that 's gone.

Oh! there is something terrible to see
A deathless spirit, born to majesty 187
Of thought, arisen sun-like on a sky
Where memory of good or ill shall die

Never again ; to see that soul, as goes
The light of earth, for ever o'er its woes,
Watching, unmoved, the farewell of a breath, 15-
Hurrying it onward to eternal death.
Unmoved ! Alas ! though multitudes may know
The living pride, few see the dastard glow
Of dying sinfulness : all human gaze
Shunning, as pestilence, it ends its days. 16-

Slowly with Edmund chimed the hours away
In solitude : he thought upon the play
Of the mind's change with bitterness, and sigh'd
In sorrow that existence had not died
When light as rainbow colours on the sprays, 16-
And free as summer winds o'er mountain braes,
And pass'd away as brightly ; never lived
To perish slowly, and to hang bereaved,
All lonely as a faded leaf, the last
Of autumn's wither'd children on the blast. 17-

“ Oh! welcome death!” he cried; “ the past hath been,
All I can say, is, would I had not seen
This light of sorrow— call it not of life—
That juggles us across a waste of strife
To death and deep forgetfulness. Yes, all, 170
The righteous and the murderer, must fall
Into the same oblivion. I had thought
A little fame had some remittance brought
From overwhelming death; but ’twas a lie!
A haze upon the yet unfilmed eye. 180
A lie! and ye, who follow to the doom
Of the ambitious, come unto my tomb
And read; this cenotaph its plate shall flame:
‘ Here rots a carcass without name or fame; ’
But ye, who worship these, go; there ’s a land 190
Where tombs for ages in the bright sun stand
Unwasted; where the Nile his tribute rolls,
The Arab o’er the mould’ring temple strolls;
Gaze on its pyramids, turn to its sky,
And ask whose ashes in the ruins lie: 195

The tissue ; but there lived not one to tell 235
The changes that, since early years, befell
So haplessly ; all dead, or something worse.
In sooth, there was a terrible reverse :
No solitary one, that once in life
And light play'd round the heart in beauty rife. 240
“ Yet,” musing, “ it may be there lives, in sooth,
One we call'd brother in the days of youth ;
He knew a secret.” — Here he mutely stood
Indulging in a reverie, — a mood
Disturb'd and broken, as by chance he gazed 245
Over a paper, — started, paused, and raised
Again the appalling spectacle. It was :
“ The utmost penalty of human laws,
To-morrow, falls on one ; ”* — he named her not :
“ Oh God, thy curse, thy retributive lot,” 250
He cried, “ is on me ! ” — There were one or two
Strange lines, beneath the letter, caught his view :
They said, “ If you desire, the midnight doors

* See note at the end of the Poem.

Shall open to your name. Doubt not, nor pause ;
For mercy, pause not !"—

Stretch'd upon the floor 25
In swooning helplessness, when oped the door
Unto his call, the trembling vassals found
Their senseless lord : the leech appear'd, and bound
His raving temples. Never knew they ought
Of that night's history, save one who brought 26
Awful descriptions of his blasphemy ;
And said 'twas strange, and horrible to see
The workings of his frenzy, till a calm
Of consciousness came over him, a balm
Of reason's incense, soft as seas that lay 26
At rest beneath a floating moonbeam's play
Over its surface, while, beneath its breast,
Murmurs the storm ; so seem'd his treacherous rest
During that interval, for there would come
A presage o'er his features of a doom 27
Wild and uncertain ; and the sunk eye shone,

With a foreboding lustre, not its own ;
But of another world.

At midnight all
Were order'd from his presence, within call
To linger near : A stranger priest and he 275
Communed away the hours of misery.
Then both were stirring out ; and, with an eye
Of scowling anguish, Edmund pass'd them by,
Waving them silence ; none dare disobey.
But from that solemn midnight, to this day, 280
None saw their master more ; they never knew
Where he conceal'd himself ; or where he drew
His latest sigh of agonizing breath.
And many a strange conjecture of his death,
And many a dark, unholy tale they tell, 285
Of how their lord, unconsecrated, fell.

That night, as look'd the shepherd of the hill
Abroad to con the weather, all was still—

All hush'd ; but there were voiceless signs that told
Of coming storms : He's busy in his fold. 29.
He gazed in silence on the mountain head,
Capp'd by a small white cloud ; alas ! he read
Something prophetic in the darkening glow,
Like to a helmet on a warrior's brow ;
For to his fleecy children he is gone 29f
Downcast, and, ere his toilsome duty's done,
Many a houseless traveller afar
Has lost the glimmer of the evening star.

Fiercely and loud the crash of heaven came
Upon the towers, all roofless, to the flame. 30.
Many a mountain, time-worn in the heaven
Of olden storms, that awful night was riven
Beneath the linked bolts, where loudly scream
The dying eagles in the lightning's gleam ;
Many a swollen river, roaring wide, 30c
Buried the steed and rider in its tide ;

So terrible the blast, so keen the howl,
'Tis said the fox, the wild wolf, on their prow!
Perish'd within the sheepcot ; and the bells
Within the rocking steeples toll'd themselves. 36

Oh ! then, if luxury, alarm'd from sleep,
Listed with terror to the sounding deep
Wailing around the homes, where shrunk the great
With horror— if the virtuous fear'd that fate
Was busy,— what a craven fear must dwell 37
Among the tenants of a dungeon cell !
Unspeakable ! see, by the lightning's flash,
As through the prison-bars its wild-fires dash ;
Mark ye that pale form,— see the streaming hair—
Falling unbraided o'er a brow, where care 38
Hath held a jubilee ; the eye that glows
From the straw pallet, not a tear-drop flows
Over its scorching glare ; how wild she seems !
'Tis Ina ! by the lightning as it gleams.

Child of misfortune—must we say of crime? 311
There lay she trembling to the howling chime
Of tempests on the rushing of the air,
As if companions of her stern despair—
Oh mercy ! as the fires around her play,
How is she alter'd ! there is not a ray 312
Of beauty,—all is sickly, cold decay !
She raised her hand, and to her forehead prest
Its marble coldness, on her heaving breast
The fetters clink'd ; that sound a lifetime brought
Of recollection ; years the single thought 313
Seem'd waking : she had died that hour, and cursed
Her breaking heart, but for the tears that burst
In sainted floods, as waters to the lands
Parch'd by a wilderness of lifeless sands.
Each shower erased some deep reflection's trace, 314
Falling as dewy hope upon her face ;
A herald of the soul, arousing sleep
Of thought, that like a pearl enshrined in deep,

Deep waters, under sorrowing had lain
Buried, but never dead, through years of pain : 345
“ That they who kneel’d repented not in vain.”
Loud burst a peal of thunder, wall and tower
Unto their basements rock’d beneath its power ;
Bright fell the searing lightning— See, oh ! see
The long lost sinner bendeth on her knee !— 350
Another flash— Are those, by that red light,
The spirits of the storm ? Behold the light !
Struck to the earth, the fetter’d hands, the eye
Piercing into the lurid, molten sky—
A sheet of fire—she sinks—down to the floor 355
As stricken by a bolt, as life were o’er !

’Tis not. She waken’d. Lo ! the storm was fled ;
The rains roll’d by, the very winds seem’d dead
Among the clouds piled in the wan moonlight ;
Distinctly boom’d upon the voiceless night 360
The melancholy mid-watth. Up she sprung ;
Her rusted chains upon the silence rung ;

She rose to prayer—stranger! as if purified
With the electric fire—as sin had died
Upon the tempest's wake. How wistfully 365
She watch'd those fetters of her infamy,
That as a blood-stain on the ivory seem'd
In rusted heaviness! The wristband gleam'd
A fearful amulet, that, with the breath
Of morning rise, must wed her unto death. 370
She paused, for there were sounds upon the wing—
God! 'twas the workmen on the scaffolding!
The creaking screw, the hammer's measured stroke—
Oh! 'twas a trying agony, as broke
Each voice of death upon the stage, where she, 375
From earth, must plunge so ignominiously
Unpitied to a dark eternity!

O God! it was a ghastly bitterness,
Over that bosom, born to gladness,
To hear those knells! Like sister to pale Sorrow 380
She kneel'd in watchfulness of that sad morrow,

Of slaughter I am guiltless as that moon
Whose waning from the earth I follow soon."
" Daughter, I shall return."

He left, in sadness,
Deeming she raved, and wander'd in her madness ;
Yet 'twas a tale of truth : but crime and sin 420
Behind them cast an awful shadowing,
Damping the light of credence : men will turn
Aye from a spectre fear they learn'd to spurn.

A moment she gazed after him—she sigh'd ;
Lonely, and pale, as Death's unsightly bride, 425
She wept, but kneel'd unto the holy throne,
Where fly the fatherless when friends are gone.
Away, fast fading like a bygone dream,
Afar upon the memory each gleam
Of the world lessen'd ; she had far less dread 430
Of dissolution than a fear to tread

The earth. "Come, death ! and yet the curse is strong
To perish basely in that hooting throng.

Alas ! I would esteem it as a bliss

To lie where sun-smiles the grave flowers kiss ; 435

Where springs the wild rose, and the violets blue

Seem to lament us in the midnight dew ;

Or in the old cathedral's fretted pile,

Among the proud names of its imaged aisle

To rest ; where moonbeams o'er the marble play, 440

Minding us of the bright soul that's away.

'Twere light, adown the still, unfathom'd deep,

Among its pearly caverns aye to sleep ;

'Twere light upon the wilderness to die,

And, whitening in the sun, for ages lie ; 445

But to be strangled, and to hear the crowd

Muttering curses, as within its shroud

The spirit flutters ; ay, before 'tis fled

The knife may rankle in the flesh scarce dead,

And the dissecting steel may mangle down 450

Each beauty ere its hue of life be flown ;

While the bleach'd skeletons——"

Two slowly peal'd !

A slight convulsive throb her lips reveal'd ;
Her forehead touch'd the mouldering, clammy wall :
She listen'd to the oozing drops that fall 43
From the cold stalactites, which time and wet
Have form'd through centuries of dungeon fret.
Like them, she felt the wasting of that sea
Of mortal billows to eternity ;
But she was calm, and trouble came no more : 44
For, as the wan-lights play'd across the floor,
She thought on other years, until repose,
A blessed token ! settled on her brows.

Why doth she wake ? Is it a fancying,
As children hear the sea-tide murmuring 44.5
Through fretted shells ? Or did a voice of earth
Disturb the lone cell, like a fairy-birth ?
Listen that sign ! a stifled sob—a shade
Doth intercept the falling beams that play'd

Over her sleep ; a sable figure draws 470
Nearer the couch, and, with a long-drawn pause
Of pain, he heaved a sigh. The red light fell
Upon that chasten'd hermit of the cell,
And the unruffled lineaments, at rest,
Told there was peace and hope within the breast 475
Slumbering sweet. And he would move his pale,
Pale brow to hers ; and would the breath inhale
From marble lips. He whisper'd, " Now I know
There is repentance, promise in that glow
Of seraph-quiet." By the squalid bed 480
He placed the lamp ; he bent his knee ; his head
Lean'd on her hand. He raised his swimming eye
Gazing above, imploring from on high
A sinner's blessing ; but he durst not stay —
She woke—he seized the light—he is away ! 485

Away! — "'Twas he—'twas Edmund's self!" she cried,
" Kneeling beside me. Yes, he call'd me bride—

Gone as a vision!—as a mockery
Foreboding evil. No, it cannot be!
I dream'd of other regions in my rest ; 440
And there was one, in radiant garments dress'd,
Seem'd like my mother— Oh ! it is a pain
Disturbing such a thought!—I'll sleep again."

How long she slept so tranquilly she knew
But little. Like a lily, bathed in dew, 445
She waken'd chill, but chasten'd. When a tread
Resounded near her dungeon, she felt dread,
Not for death's summons, not the muffled peal,
But for some late reprieve. All she could feel
Of torture, she had suffer'd ; earth had less 500
Now, than a scaffold, and a rope to bless
Her wither'd feelings ; sin was pardon'd too,
She knew it by the feeling on her brow.

The sullen footstep, echoing and near,
Broke on her presence. " Hail, and peace be here," 505

The warder said. He bow'd his head, to see
That kneeling one. Oh, benedicite!
A young and wasted female bowing there :
Who would not be remember'd in that prayer?

“ Your benison, good lady ; I salute §10
You with an offering ; some fair repute
Hath rescued you. Forgiveness from the Heaven
Be with you ! there is earthly pardon given ;
You are acquitted, lady.” Not a word
Responded she. She trembled, overpower'd — §11
She swoon'd away, as tender lilies slain
By thunder storms. Recovering, with pain
She credited existence— How she flew
To seize the outstretch'd letter!

He withdrew.

She read : — “ Your Edmund's brother, your true friend, §12
Hath proved you innocent. Go, lady, mend

The past—the future is a veiled store
 Of mystery—improve it ; and—no more—
 Your father lives.”

That measure of delight,
 Like to a fairy hymn upon the night, 625
 Fell soft and startling ; it awoke her sense
 Unto the earth again with thoughts intense,
 Yet mellow'd by her sorrows. Low she pray'd
 To be with humble fortitude array'd.
 And she is pardon'd ; the black scaffold fell 525
 Unsatiated, with no tale to tell
 Of blood-stain'd torture ; the assembled throng
 Ungloated went ; they heard no funeral song.

It is the morning-tide. There resteth one
 Gazing upon the spires, that glittering shone 535
 In gay attire, a traveller weary grown—
 'Tis Ina. Very often on her way
 She paused to mark, where, in the bright sun, lay

The settling scene, reflecting on the years
Faded and gone. Beneath her falling tears 535
Looking in wistfulness, she thought upon
The dim, sad changes that had roll'd along
Its mighty annals, since she hail'd the strife,
In the full tide of beauty, and of life,
So many weary years ago ; and now, 540
What was she ? There was sickness on her brow,
Grief on her heart. Oh ! what a tale they'd tell,
If o'er the history memory dared to dwell !
In truth, 'twas agonizing ! Yet she took
Oft on her journey a long, farewell look 545
Of the royal city, which had been to her
The tomb of all her hopes. The wanderer
Turn'd, and she bade a solemn, last adieu
To scenes that never more should meet her view :
Never again ! She wish'd the rising day 550
The sight, the memory would steal away.

* * * * *

The angels, in the sapphire-blazing west
Are ushering the sun unto his rest,
Among the golden clouds, we never see
But some unknown desire of mystery 55
Stirs up the mind. As furl his mighty wings,
The universe a solemn pæan sings
Unto his parting ; bless'd with perfumed showers,
As earth uplifts her gorgeous breast of flowers,
Each crimson cup, in beauty to the dew, 56
Seeming from out the everlasting blue
To draw its crystal purity. The neat,
Retired hamlet, at the mountain's feet,
Is resting, like a worn bird by the side
Of the still lake. Its eaves of thatch are dyed, 57
And flooded in that holy crimson tide.
From out the groves, all varied in their dye,
As emeralds and amber brightly lie,
A woodland choir are warbling, loud and far,
An anthem to the rising evening star. 58

But there is one spot brighter than the rest—
A diamond in the deep : The rose, that press'd
Its blushes through the vine-embowering,
Would higher to the walls its crimson fling ;
The gate was larger, and the rich parterre 575
Display'd more ornament, repaid more care :
The vicar, old Alferdo, long dwelt there,
Long dwelt a hermit man. For there were none
He once adored ; his aged wife was gone
On a far travel many years ago, 580
When Ina blighted all their promise. Oh !
He was a melancholy man : his years
Of yearning solitude he pass'd in tears,
And prayers for comfort. But his weary day
Of life is passing silently away. 585

Reclining on a couch, he watch'd the west,
As a bright prophet presaging his rest ;
For he was journeying to the land of shades.
A long farewell unto his native glades,

And mountain grandeur, he had crept to look — 90
A parting which his spirit joyfully took.
There was no grief—no sorrow on his heart;
No earthly tie he would not gladly part :
For, like that golden disk, he knew his night
Of darkness would awaken unto light. 95

An orphan of the world—a child of care—
Is drawing near his home. Her floating hair
Escaped beneath its braidings, and it fell
Over the features some strange secret tell.
She droops her forehead ; moves in sorrowing, 100
Slow as a sea-bird wounded in its wing.
Wearied she stood. He said, “ If sickly, stay,
Child of misfortunes ; daughter of the way,
You’re welcome to my roof. It may be”—here
He falter’d, and a solitary tear 105
Roll’d down his furrow’d cheek—he dried his grief—
“ It may be, I have one who seeks relief,

Like you, from strangers."— Fallen on her knee,
In lamentation—tearful ecstasy—
She clasp'd his venerable feet. She cried, 610
" O father ! my loved sire, can you abide
The coming of your infant ? Say, oh ! say
I am your child !"

Some wandering dim ray
Lighted his features ; his unsettled mind
Was struggling rapidly with thoughts enshrined 615
Within the memories of old. He smiled
Most heavenly, and said, " It is my child !"
He smiled no more—a blank, a solemn breath,
As 'of a blight, came over him,—'twas death!

* * * * *

'Tis over ! Lo ! a long, long sable train 620
Of sorrow-stricken mourners, down a lane
Move onward to a Gothic pile, that stood,
Time-worn, embowered in a hoary wood

Of solemn yew trees ; and there floateth by
A burial dirge upon the breezeless sky. 625
Beneath the gloomy arch they wind along
Unto the altar, as the funeral song
Of many voices, and the organ's peal,
Swell through the aisles, making the Stoic feel.
The sun adown the fretted oriel shone 630
In mockery upon the altar stone :
Beneath the gaudy ray—it is no dream !
The epitaphs of two dark coffins gleam.
Yes, as in their earlier love they vied,
So, in their last love, sire and daughter died. 635

'Tis over ! A young, weeping sister band,
Singing a mournful hymn, go, hand in hand,
Spreading sepulchral flowers, watered by
The sacred incense of the tearful eye,
Around the snowy urn : an emblem bright 640
Of the twin spirits that have wing'd their flight.

Solemnly rose, above the gloated tomb,
A wild adieu. The mourners bend them home.
Among the trees, by glimpses, they are seen
Moving, a fading, dark line through the green, 645
Till fainter fall the plaintive chimes of wo,
Mellow'd upon the ear, as faint and low
Breathes on the distance its departing strain,
Like the subsiding of the silver main.

'Tis over ! The cathedral pile is blest 650
In hallow'd stillness ; mute as those who rest
Within the sanctuary of its aisles.
And, here and there, a shafted column smiles
In sunlight, like a spirit bending down
On those who slumber without tear or frown. 655
Peace to the dead ! There is a shadow, more
Than should be, moving o'er the marble floor :
It bendeth o'er a grave—deep, stifled sighs,
Tokens of human misery, arise

Upon the voiceless air, to break the sleep “
Of sounds that ever there should slumber deep.
A white tomb, and a dark form o’er it leans,
The living to the dead—how strange it seems !
The legends of that valley often say,
The sexton, with the morrow of the day “
After the burial, found a stranger dead,
And cold ; upon a new made tomb his head
Was resting. And they say, a priest unknown
Lamented him,—interr’d him. All are gone
Who might have clear’d the mystery. But some “
Thought they remember’d, in the vicar’s home,
A being similar, when Ina was
The blossom of their valley. But, alas !——

’Tis over ! There are four old yew trees grow
Over a monumental grave below, “
Solemn but lovely, as they darkly stand,
Sacred to memory, a weeping band

In the bright dews of midnight. There are four
Strange deaths recorded in a rude wild lore :
A sire—a mother—daughter,—and then one 65
Who should have died a husband, and a son.
And o'er the tomb, in snow-white marble traced
A statue bends : 'tis said, that priest hath placed
The semblance there, atoning for some crimes
Committed, and repented of in times 68
Long pass'd. And still beneath the wan moonshine
The pilgrim reads 'a moral in the line
Of the brief cenotaph : whose tale imparts
Something of early blighted—broken hearts.

'Tis over ! And that snow-white statue's fading, 69
As time with deeper tinge each beauty's shading.
The church is in its ruins ; and the breeze
Goes moaning through its crumbling crevices.
The voice of man is heard not in the pile ;
His haughty step hath sunk upon the aisle 72

Mouldering into its grave of years : and oh !
Of those forgotten tenants of a slow
And dark corruption, the dim history
Of few is living in our memory.
But often, when a diadem of snow 700
Hath wedded heaven to the mountain's brow ;
And the old storms among the ruins gray
Sing a reveillé to the times away,—
The shepherd bids the maiden, to her lute,
Chant an old ballad. 'Tis a sad repute 705
Tradition hath preserved—a rude, rude lay—
A tribute to the spirits pass'd away.

THE CYPRESS-TREE.

I.

Oh ! she, that like a silver wave,
Was born in brilliancy,
Is shrouded in the early grave
Under the Cypress-tree.

710

II.

The spirit of an evil shade
O'erspread her infancy :
A blight upon the flower they laid
Under the Cypress-tree.

715

III.

Her travel was a waste of tears
Unto the grave : where he
Fell with her, as a leaf that sears
Under the Cypress-tree.

IV.

He that had never loved, till love
Became a mockery ;
They laid him in the solemn grove,
Under the Cypress-tree.

V.

Alas ! it was her mother's doom :
She died of misery.
They gather'd her unto the tomb
Under the Cypress-tree.

VI.

They gather'd then her father's crest
Unto his heraldry :
They laid the old man to his rest
Under the Cypress-tree.

750

VII.

They laid four broken hearts to sleep
Within the secrecy
Of the green grave ; they laid them deep
Under the Cypress-tree.

755

VIII.

The nightingale, that spot hard by,
Will sing her melody ;
As she lamented those who lie
Under the Cypress-tree.

IX.

The maidens of our valley go, 744
At Hallowmas, to see,
The grave, and make their true love vow
Under the Cypress-tree.

X.

The lovers plight their early vows,
At midnight there, to be 745
True by the memory of those
Under the Cypress-tree.

NOTE, p. 90. line 5 from bottom.

For the conviction of those, should there be any sceptical enough to dispute the possibility of a crime so odious as infanticide, following in the wake of disobedience and sin—or their being perpetrated by individuals, whose breasts were once influenced by the innocent passions of a virtuous youth,—the Editor can record a revolting incident, which occurred some years ago, and the authors of which may yet exist, to tremble at its truth.

A lady, (once so, in the strictest application of the term) residing in a populous city of our island, fell off—how it matters not—from her constancy, in the absence of her husband. Young, beautiful, virtuous, but for that “damned spot,” she became alarmed and distracted with fear for the consequences. She heard of her husband’s anticipated return from the Indies. She felt herself in a delicate situation; dread of his justly-merited indignation, fear of the world’s “finger of scorn,” wrought her terrified senses to resolution: she betook herself to a celebrated metropolis, gave birth to a witness to her criminality; and then came the trial. She had two alternatives,—open confession, or secret murder; she attempted the latter, which was frustrated by the providential interposition of a medical man. The unfortunate little sufferer was rescued from her unnatural cruelty, merely to be consigned to the management of some miscreants, who, for some mercenary consideration, ultimately sacrificed the child by starvation.

Many years subsequent to this period, the mother of the murdered child passed through the same metropolis, in company with her unconscious husband ; and, by singular fatality, as rolling along one of its bridges in the splendour of equipage, she encountered the physician, who, overwhelmed for the moment with surprise and want of determination, allowed justice to be deprived of its victim ; and permitted her to escape to the *enjoyment* of her meditations and fair fame !

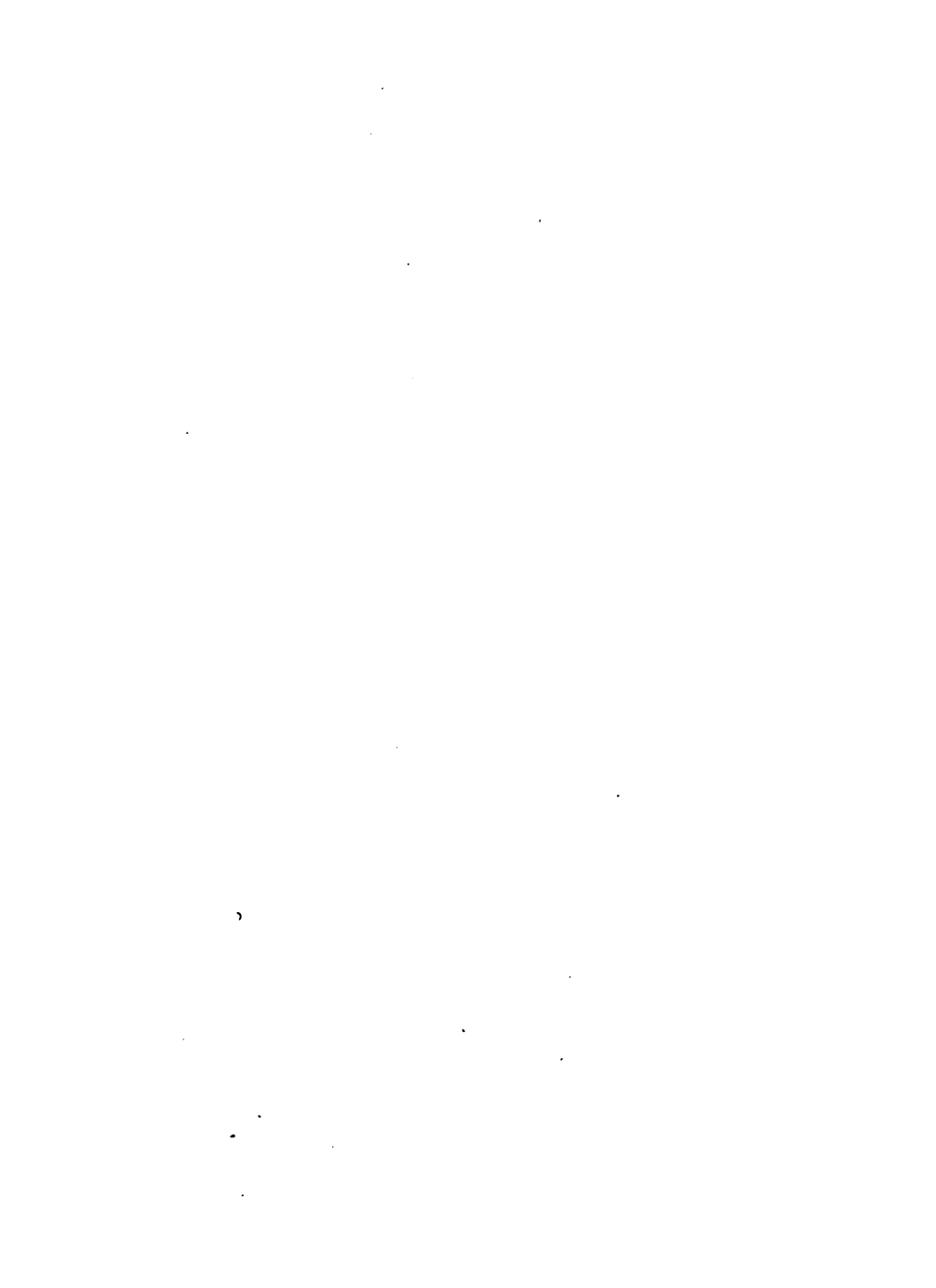
THE
VISION OF FERIDOON,
AN
INDIAN BALLAD ;

FROM AN UNPUBLISHED ORIENTAL ROMANCE,
WRITTEN SOME YEARS AGO.

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle,
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime ?

BYRON.





THE VISION OF FERIDOON.

I.

THE banks of the Ganges are fair !

I have roam'd o'er the flowering sward,
Inhaling the odorous air,

When I wander'd an Indian bard.

The fig-tree and myrtle are there ;

The vine, and the cinnamon grove ;

The orange, the lemon so rare ;

With the rose, and the jessamine wove.

II.

The parrot, the wild cockatoo ;
The jay, and the paradise bird ;
The ring-doves, that all the day through,
At their amorous music are heard,—
Bespangle with plumage the shades.
And the nightingale's evening song
Floats from the ebony glades,
Like the hymn of a heavenly throng !

III.

The moon loves to rest on the streams ;
The lotus and lily delight
To sleep in the silvery beams
Of the beautiful goddess of night.
The cerulean waves at the brink
Are so placid, the antelope slim,
That has journey'd from deserts to drink,
Starts, gazing at each mirror'd limb.

IV.

Here the Peris and Genii sail

 In their cocoa nut vessels, they say.

For the traveller hath listed their wail,

 When, benighted, he wanders away;

And heard the wild vespers that rose,

 As some band of their gossamer sprites —

Their shallop a globule, that goes

 With the breeze in its murmuring flights —

V.

Have floated to tabour and fife

 As tiny as mulberry seeds,

Yet with seraphim sweetness so rife,

 That, enchanted, the faltering steeds

Have plunged in the terrible stream ;

 And their lord, as he struggles for breath,

Too fatally hears in the scream,

 The heathenish knell of his death.

VI.

It was here the dark-hair'd Feridoon,
In the shade of the banyan tree,
With Zeleuco, would gaze on the moon,
The stars in th' ethereal sea ;
Or silently worship that face,
More endearing to him than a star,
Or a moon in the fathomless space,
That was lovelier, kindlier far !

VII.

For who with Zeleuco could vie ?
Her ringlets the ravens ashame ;
Her eyes, bright as planets on high,
Were glowing with Kam-Deo's* flame.
The cygnet that sportively laves,
The snow that falls far in the west,
The reflection of light on the waves,
May never compare with her breast.

* The Hindoo God of Love.

VIII.

She was not a child of the East,
Yet she smiled on the youth of Hindoo;
She fled the seraglio's rest,
To forests with Feridoon flew.
On the fruit of the date-tree they fed,
And, when they were wearied, at night
They made of the rose leaves a bed :
The glow-worm their hymenal light.

IX.

Oh! blest was their love! for they knew
Not the world, nor ambition, nor pride :
The moments all blissfully flew
O'er the passionate boy and his bride.
Like the Parents of Eden they seem'd,
A beautiful emblem of love,
Invoking the blessings that beam'd
On the children of earth from above.

X.

To their bower they had saunter'd one eve,
And reposed in its bosom of shade,
Where the shrubs would fantastically weave
Round the pillars of santil-wood made;
Where the primrose and gilly-flower gay,
The violet fragrant and blue,
And the sun-flower, that worships the day,
With the tulip's chameleon hue,

XI.

Enrich'd the sweet zephyrs that stray'd,
Among blossoms, as wantons the bee,
And over the slumberers play'd,
As grateful as breaths from the sea.
Here, clasp'd in each other's embrace,
Oblivion over them stole,
Banishing every trace
Of care, save the dreams of the soul.

XII.

But care, if he leave us a while,
To some dream of delights far away
Will return with the wakening smile —
A cloud o'er the glory of day.
Oh! the joys of this world are all dash'd
With a struggle of pleasure and wo!
A heaven of sunshine o'ercast,
Where the waters of sorrow shall flow.

XIII.

Lo! forth from the river a strain
Of no earthly music is heard;
And such as may never again
Be listed, or told of by bard.
It floated away on the air
Soft, sweet as a dirge for the dead;
In sooth, 'twas a symphony fair!
It murmur'd round Feridoon's head.

XIV.

He started, he gazed on a bright
Celestial vision that came
Gilding the waters, as light
Arising in orient flame.
Unearthly the form, but so fair,
That a spirit from high it must be;
Or a Peri of viewless air,
Or nymph of the emerald sea.

XV.

Her tresses were ringlets of gold,
And braided with pearls of the deep;
Her forehead, the ivory's mould,
Serene as an infant asleep;
Her eyebrows were bows in the sky,
Foretelling of brilliance of joy;
All azure and bright was her eye,
As the bulbul's all melting and coy.

XVI.

Love sportively smiled in her face,
Her figure a seraphim's seem'd,
And pleasure, and music, and grace,
O'er the goddess enchantingly beam'd.
And who so much beauty could see,
And who to her melody rare
Could list without sighing to be
A spirit, that heaven to share !

XVII.

But the Indian regarded her as
The serpent you 'd note at his wiles,
And his coilings and turns in the grass
Suspiciously watch ; so the smiles
And the lures of the Naiad so gay
Were lost on the young Feridoon :
He shelter'd his eyes from the ray
Of a brilliancy dazzling the noon.

XVIII.

And thrice he essay'd to address
The vision, but ever in vain ;
He felt a wild influence press
On his senses ; unsteady, his brain
Swam with confusion, as finding,
By magic, he follow'd the Naiad ;
And, whilst he resisted, more binding
The virtue by which he was led.

XIX.

She took the Hindoo by the hand,
He struggled to burst from her spell—
'Twas useless!—they skimm'd o'er the sand,
They sank in the gurgling swell.
Yet still they moved on, and he knew,
Not the slightest sensations of death ;
As swift through the waters they flew,
He gather'd ambrosial breath.

XX.

Full oft as the goddess imprinted
 An impassion'd salute on his face,
It seem'd like the kiss that delighted—
 He breathed in Zeleuca's embrace.
He pillow'd his head on her breast,
 And, sighing the name of his love,
Sank on a bosom to rest,
 As soft as the Indian dove.

XXI.

Alas! we may easily deem
 We possess the repose we desire;
But, as surely we burst from the dream
 That blinded, not smother'd, the fire.
As with the consumptive, the eye,
 Near death, is most brilliant and bright;
And Hope, the false wizard, beats high
 When the spirit is wing'd for its flight!

XXII.

The Indian hath waken'd, and, lo!
He reclines in an emerald cave;
Where the waters with moanings do flow,
And the billows unceasingly lave.
The goddess of ocean is there,
She's plaintively singing her grief,
And braiding with coral her hair;
But she loves, and she finds no relief.

XXIII.

She loves the dark Indian boy;
She bore him to seas of the west;
To please him, her constant employ,
With his love to be happy—be blest!
She display'd the old wealth of the deep,
The treasures of sea-kings below,
Where the pearls in oblivion sleep,
And the diamonds all uselessly glow.

XXIV.

But still he upbraidingly turns,
And implores to be carried to earth ;
He laments the young bosom that burns,
And doubts for her Feridoon's death.
Nor the elegance, passing all show,
Of the Naiad can alter his love ;
Nor the glittering pleasures below,
Hide the tear for the memory above.

XXV.

Then away to the eastward they hied,
Where Neptune, in ocean enthroned,
O'er the tempests is wont to preside ;
Where the storms in their caverns are bound.
She shew'd him the adamant domes,
Where whirlpools and hurricanes brood ;
She shew'd him the tides in their homes,
And their spirits of evil and good.

XXVI.

They rode on the storm : she display'd
The ruin their fury could raise ;
She spoke, and the Naiads, array'd
In thousands, approach'd in her praise.
But Feridoon loved not the might
Of destruction, of sorrow, and pain :
He spurn'd the enchantment of sight,
And sigh'd for Zeleuca again.

XXVII.

Then away to the north, to the cold,
The eternal dominions of snow
They hied ; and she bids him behold
Where the bright icy palaces grow.
In a grotto of crystal, that shone
With a myriad of prismatic rays,
Where the lustre and blaze might alone
Be endured by immortal gaze ;

XXVIII.

On the down from the breast of the swan,
O'er a couch of the coral tree spread,
She laid him, the streams as they ran
Sounding requiems over his head.
She whisper'd, "If you will be mine,
A king of the ocean to be,
The dominion of all shall be thine
In the emerald realms of the sea."

XXXIX.

But the lustre of jewels, the north,
Its palaces, shining like day,
Were not, with the Indian, worth
The holy, reciprocal ray
Of love from Zeleuca that beam'd;
The Naiad's delights he denied,
The delusions her fancy had dream'd
Would conquer, he proudly defied.

XXX.

Then away to the southward they hied,
Where every sublunary bliss
With enchanting illusions so vied
That fairy land must be like this !
And Feridoon gazed on the glories
Around him transcendently bright,
As those, that recorded in stories,
Are burning in regions of light.

XXXI.

Oh ! green was the fathomless sea !
So lucid, that stars of the noon,*
Like fire-flies spangling a tree,
A radiant galaxy shone.
The sun bathed his beams in the deep,
And lighted the diamond saloons,
Reflecting his glittering sleep,
As the reign of a myriad moons.

* The stars are visible at noonday in the unclouded regions
of the east and south-east.

xxxii.

On adamant, palaces based,
Enchantingly rose to his view ;
The interiors magicly traced
By the waves of the ocean so blue !
The walls were adorn'd with cornelian
Columns in emerald based,
The capitals of the cerulean
Amethyst beautifully chased.

xxxiii.

Of marble and jasper the floor ;
Of shells of Iridean dye
The ceilings ; the magical stores
Bewilder'd and wearied the eye.
The couches with rubies inlaid,
A throne of the sapphire was there ;
The Indian boy and the Naiad
Were regaled with each luxury rare.

XXXIV.

They feasted on fruits of the land,
They feasted on fish of the waves ;
And sea-nymphs in myriads stand
To minister to them as slaves.
They roam'd through the caverns where grow
The coral-tree, lichen, and palm,
Surpassing in richness the glow
Of earth's beauties—eclipsing earth's charm.

XXXV.

They listen'd to music, that stole
With a melody passing belief,
In a plaintive delight on the soul,
As joyfulness singing of grief :
And soothed by its silvery notes,
On an emerald sofa they lay ;
Lull'd from a murmur that floats
From the far-away streams at their play.

XXXVI.

Here slumber the boy overtook :

He fancied himself with his maid ;

Till, roused by the voice, to the look

Of the longing, the passionate Naiad.

Oh ! fondly she hung o'er the youth !

She wept in her joy — she believed

Him subdued by the spells of the south ;

She pictured her conquest achieved.

XXXVII.

“ Oh ! you shall be lord of these realms !

Oh ! you shall be king of these charms !”

She sobb'd, as her joy overwhelms

Her with raptures — she sunk in his arms.

“ Yes ! the young Feridoon is my love,

He forgets the attractions that erst

United his wishes above,

Where a mortal his sympathies nursed.

XXXVIII.

“ No, Genius of Evil ! no, never !

The chord that vibrates to my soul
In that name, is awake : you may sever

As far as the pole from the pole,
But hope not our hearts to divide !

As long as the heavens shall be—
As sure as the roll of the tide,
Zeleuca, thy lover I'll be !—

XXXIX.

The Hindoo with fervour exclaim'd.

He struggled to burst the embrace
Of the goddess incensed, and inflamed,
Revenge in her kindling face.

“ Then, coward, and earth-stricken fool !

You shall wither—a slave to my power :

With immortals to will is to rule ;

Be mine —or be death's ere an hour !”

XL.

By a child of corruption be scorn'd !
With anger she raged as the storm ;
Her eyes in their wantonness burn'd ;
And, wildly enfolding his form,
She clung round his fluttering heart,
That throb'd as its chords would have broke :
Existence appear'd to depart ;
He gaspingly struggled, and—woke !

XLI.

Awoke in his arbour hard by
The Ganges, that silently flow'd ;
He gazed on his bride's lovely eye,
But his with no consciousness glow'd.
Affrighted, he stared on the scene ;
He look'd to the heavens, the sun
Was drinking the dews from the green—
The pearls from the lotus leaves hung.

XLII.

He look'd on the maiden again ;
He mutter'd,—he turn'd ; and his eyes
Were curtain'd, as sinking from pain ;
His bosom was breathing in sighs.
“ Oh ! why hath my lover not spoke ?”
Alarm'd, his Zeleuca exclaim'd ;
“ My Feridoon, since the day broke,
By your pillow I watching remain'd ;

XLIII.

“ I wiped the cold drops from your brow ;
I ween'd that my dearest was ill :
When flush'd with the orient glow,
I kiss'd you, you slumber'd, love, still.
I fancied my Feridoon dream'd,
The sleep of my harp-strings I broke ;
My name you pronounced—the tears stream'd —
I embraced my Hindoo,—he awoke.”

XLIV.

The truth on his memory crept,

He gazed, and he gazed but once more ;

He clasp'd her enraptured, and wept

In delirium—laugh'd o'er, and o'er
To find he was not with the Naiad,

Ten millions of fathoms deep, deep

In the cold coral-palaces laid,

For ever with sea nymphs to sleep.

XLV.

Oh ! the banks of the Ganges are fair !

And, oft as they roam'd by its stream,
In the moonlight and perfumed air,

He reveal'd to Zeleuca his dream.

Who, beaming with joy, would reply,—

“ There needed no goddess of sea

My Feridoon's virtue to try—

May lovers all worship like thee !”

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